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Country: Libya

Initiation Plan

Project Title	:	Institutional Capacity Development for a Sustainable Blue Economy in Libya.
Expected UNSDCF/CPD Outcome(s)	:	Output 4.1.2 and Output 2.1.1
Expected CPD Output(s)	:	Output 3.1.1
Initiation Plan Start/End Dates	:	April 2025 – December 2025
Implementing Partner	:	UNDP Libya

Libya possesses a vast yet underutilized maritime asset—its 1,900-kilometer Mediterranean coastline—which holds transformative potential for advancing sustainable economic diversification, enhancing coastal resilience, and preserving marine biodiversity. However, decades of reliance on hydrocarbons, fragmented governance, and environmental degradation have left the country's marine sectors—such as fisheries, aquaculture, marine tourism, blue trade, and coastal resource management—underdeveloped and ecologically vulnerable. Marine industries contribute less than 2% to national GDP, while over 60% of coastal ecosystems remain unmonitored or degraded due to pollution, overfishing, and weak enforcement. In response, this project represents a strategic first step toward establishing a national Blue Economy Strategy aligned with Libya's development priorities and regional commitments under the African Union's Blue Economy Strategy (2020–2030). It will catalyze inclusive and sustainable ocean-based growth while serving as a platform for biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, and employment generation, particularly for youth and coastal communities.

Structured around six interlinked outputs, the project will: conduct pollution hotspot and waste mapping to inform coastal protection (Output 1); assess the feasibility of aquaculture and marine protected areas (Output 2); strengthen inter-ministerial and stakeholder coordination under the newly formed Blue Economy Committee (Output 3); raise community awareness and build public momentum for sustainable marine practices (Output 4); initiate a localized Blue Economy grants mechanism to support innovative, youth- and women-led entrepreneurship in pilot municipalities (Output 5); and formulate a full-fledged national Blue Economy strategy and investment framework, including a donor engagement package and project document for Phase II (Output 6).

These components directly contribute to Libya's commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals—particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 13 (Climate Action)—and align with key vertical funds priorities. The project also provides a platform to engage opportunities under the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework. It will complement ongoing initiatives, including the UNDP BIOFIN (Biodiversity Finance) project, which supports sustainable financing for marine ecosystem services. Additionally, it will build synergies with the Kunming Framework proposal on endangered marine species—such as sharks and tuna—through data collection, stakeholder engagement, and aligned implementation. Crucially, the project promotes Libyan government co-financing and cost-sharing through engagement with the Ministry of Marine Wealth, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Economy and Trade, ensuring national ownership and sustainability. Together, these elements lay the foundation for a resilient, inclusive, and biodiversity-positive Blue Economy in Libya—one that protects natural capital while fostering innovation, private sector engagement, and long-term prosperity.

Programme Period:1 April – 31 December 2025

Quantum Project Number: To be filled based on UNDP system

Quantum Output Number: To be filled based on UNDP system

Inclusivity Marker:

Total resources required	USD 250,000
Total allocated resources:	USD 100,000
• Regular	TRAC 1
○ UNDP	USD 100,000
○ Donor	N/A
○ Government	N/A
Unfunded budget:	USD 150,000
In-kind Contributions	N/A

Agreed By:

Dr. Sophies Kemkhadze

Resident Representative

DocuSigned by:
Sophie Kemkhadze 28-May-2025
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I. PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTPUT

1. Introduction

Libya's extensive Mediterranean coastline, stretching over 1,900 kilometers, is one of its most valuable yet underutilized national assets. In recent years, regional momentum—driven by the African Union's Blue Economy Strategy and global calls for sustainable ocean-based growth—has converged with Libya's urgent need for economic diversification, environmental protection, and job creation. Against this backdrop, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with national institutions, has initiated a process to define and operationalize a national Sustainable Blue Economy Strategy for Libya.

Despite this potential, marine-based sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, and coastal management contribute less than 2% to Libya's GDP, and over 60% of coastal ecosystems remain unmonitored or degraded due to pollution, overfishing, and insufficient regulatory oversight. Unemployment remains high—particularly among youth—while the country's heavy dependence on hydrocarbons leaves it economically vulnerable. Fragmented governance, lack of reliable data, and limited investment in marine infrastructure further hinder progress. A draft White Paper on fisheries developed by the Ministry of Economy highlights both the challenges and the opportunities in revitalizing the sector, and this project will support its validation and integration into broader national planning.

This Project Initiation Plan (PIP) represents the first operational step toward that vision. It lays the groundwork for a full-fledged multi-year programme by launching targeted research, stakeholder consultations, and technical activities that focus on marine biodiversity protection, pollution hotspot mapping, and sustainable aquaculture feasibility. The plan seeks to balance environmental integrity with economic opportunity, aligning with Libya's national development priorities and global commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

2. Rationale

Despite its strategic maritime position and abundant marine resources, Libya's coastal and marine ecosystems face increasing pressure from untreated wastewater, industrial and hazardous waste, and unsustainable coastal practices. Marine sectors currently contribute less than 2% to Libya's GDP, despite the country having the longest Mediterranean coastline in North Africa. Moreover, over 60% of Libya's coastal ecosystems remain unmonitored or degraded, with growing threats from pollution, overfishing, and lack of integrated marine governance. Studies from the Libyan Center for Remote Sensing, the Al-Bariouni Study Center, and other national bodies highlight widespread pollution and degradation—conditions that endanger both biodiversity and the potential for sustainable livelihoods in fisheries, aquaculture, and tourism. These concerns echo the priorities outlined in the African Union's Blue Economy Strategy (2020–2030), which calls on member states to develop inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient ocean-based economies.

At the same time, economic pressures, especially in coastal communities, are intensifying. Libya's dependency on hydrocarbons has left key sectors such as marine wealth underdeveloped. According to the Ministry of Marine Wealth, aquaculture and fishing port infrastructure remain incomplete, while demand for marine products and clean coastal infrastructure continues to grow.

Encouragingly, recent developments indicate a growing interest in the Blue Economy. The National Aquaculture Project, established by the Libyan government, aims to enhance productivity and food security while promoting coastal development and reducing urban migration. The project emphasizes strengthening partnerships with the private sector and local communities. Building on

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this momentum, the current initiative will engage directly with fishing unions and the Fish Grand Market to raise awareness and promote sustainable practices aligned with the project's principles. These partnerships will support behavioral change, market readiness, and coastal stewardship.

This initiation phase responds to these interlinked environmental and economic challenges by:

- Identifying marine pollution hotspots and priority waste management issues affecting ecosystems and fisheries;
- Scoping aquaculture viability and marine protected areas as sustainable growth anchors;
- Activating institutional and community partnerships under the national Blue Economy Committee (Decree 119 / 2025);
- Raising public awareness and community engagement around marine waste, coastal sustainability, and Blue Economy principles;
- Piloting a localized grants mechanism to support youth- and women-led Blue Economy entrepreneurship in coastal municipalities.
- Preparing the technical, operational, and financial foundation for a long-term national strategy and investment pipeline.

In parallel, the project will contribute to biodiversity conservation while also acting as a catalyst to foster both public and private sector investment, support entrepreneurship, and strengthen local economic resilience through inclusive and sustainable marine resource use.

3. Outputs and Activities

This section outlines the main outputs and defines summary of activities under the initiation phase:

Output 1: Coastal Pollution Hotspots Identified, Categorized, and Mapped for Evidence-Based Marine Protection Planning

Definition:

A comprehensive assessment and geospatial mapping of Libya's coastal pollution hotspots, identifying, classifying, and ranking major sources of pollution by their impact on marine biodiversity. This output will provide the technical foundation for marine pollution reduction strategies under the national Blue Economy programme.

Output 2: Aquaculture Feasibility and Marine Protected Area (MPA) Viability Assessed to Support Economic Diversification and Ecosystem Restoration

Definition:

A dual-track pre-feasibility assessment of aquaculture development and marine conservation opportunities, focusing on several pilot locations including Farwa, Ain Al-Zayan, and Timimi—to inform sustainable marine-based economic activities and biodiversity protection. This output supports the identification of investable aquaculture zones, restoration priorities, and the early planning of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Ramsar site rehabilitation, and update the data and analysis of the draft national Fisheries Policy Paper.

Output 3: Multi-Stakeholder Consultations and Technical Coordination Mechanisms Strengthened to Build a Cross-Sector Blue Economy Governance Foundation

Definition:

This output focuses on enhancing institutional coordination and stakeholder engagement in support of Libya's emerging Blue Economy framework. It will facilitate structured dialogue among key actors across government, academia, the private sector, and coastal communities, while operationalizing governance mechanisms under Decree No. 119 (2025) establishing the National Blue Economy Committee.

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Output 4: Community Engagement and Public Awareness on Marine Waste and Blue Economy Strengthened to Build Public Support and National Momentum

Definition:

This output focuses on raising public awareness and strengthening community-level engagement around marine pollution and the principles of the Blue Economy. It aims to build visibility for the national strategy, generate bottom-up momentum for behavioral change, and foster a shared sense of responsibility for protecting marine ecosystems and coastal livelihoods.

Output 5: Local Blue Economy Grants Mechanism Established to Support Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Definition:

This output aims to initiate preparatory activities for the design and piloting of a national grants mechanism to support sustainable Blue Economy entrepreneurship—particularly among women and youth. It will establish the groundwork for a full-fledged grant scheme through local economic diagnostics, stakeholder engagement, and the launch of a pilot Blue Economy Idea Challenge, including the provision of micro-grants to selected early-stage concepts. These efforts will guide the design of targeted investments and financing tools under the full PRODOC.

Output 6: Final Cooperation Framework, Project Documentation, and Donor Engagement Prepared to Transition into Full-Scale Programme Implementation

Definition:

This output completes the initiation phase by consolidating research findings, stakeholder inputs, and technical assessments into a full-fledged project proposal, aligned with national priorities and donor expectations. It will formalize institutional partnerships and provide the foundation for Phase II implementation and resource mobilization.

II. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The activities under this Project Initiation Plan (PIP) will be implemented by UNDP Libya under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM), with overall responsibility and accountability for project delivery resting with UNDP. The project will be managed by the UNDP Energy and Environment Pillar, with technical support from the BIOFIN initiative and in close coordination with national counterparts through the National Blue Economy Committee, established by Ministerial Decision No. 119 (2025).UNDP will serve as the Executing Agency and will be responsible for all aspects of project management, including planning, implementation oversight, financial management, procurement, and recruitment, following its internal Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP). Reporting on progress, results, and deliverables will be made to the UNDP Resident Representative or Deputy Resident Representative.

Key Roles and Functions

- Project Manager: Ali El Muntaser (UNDP Libya)

Responsible for day-to-day project management, coordination with national partners, monitoring of activities, and delivery of outputs in accordance with the PIP.

- Project Officer: Ahmed Sawalim (UNDP Libya / BIOFIN Lead)

Provides technical inputs, supports implementation of activities, ensures alignment with BIOFIN initiative, and contributes to knowledge management and reporting.

The PIP will be implemented in close partnership with relevant national ministries and institutions, ensuring ownership, capacity building, and sustainability of results as the project transitions toward a full-fledged national Blue Economy programme.

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III. MONITORING

The monitoring of the Project Initiation Plan (PIP) will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP), specifically the Results-Based Management (RBM) guidelines and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework. The objective is to ensure timely and effective implementation of planned activities, track progress toward expected outputs, and inform the development of a full project document.

The PIP will adopt an adaptive and context-responsive monitoring approach, this includes real-time data collection, regular analysis, and iterative learning to support evidence-based decision-making and course correction where necessary.

Quarterly monitoring will be conducted in coordination with the Programme Management Support Unit (PMSU) using standard UNDP tools. A final report including lessons learned will be submitted at the end of the plan.

Key deliverables & timeline:

- Baseline Assessment Report – June 2025
- Feasibility Study Summaries – July 2025
- Roundtables and Consultations – June–August 2025
- Awareness Activities – August–September 2025
- Final MoU & PRODOC – October 2025
- Final Report – November 2025

IV. RISK AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Limited stakeholder engagement	Leverage national committee (Decree 119/2025) and early consultations
Data gaps or restricted access	Use MoUs or leverage MoE and MoMR facilitation with research centers
Political or logistical delays	Keep activities flexible and focus on local partnerships and virtual tools

V. FUNDING AND DETAILED BUDGET

The following table outlines the detailed budget allocation for the Project Initiation Plan (PIP), integrating a 7% General Management Support (GMS) fee in line with UNDP cost recovery policies. The **funded amount of USD 100,000**, provided through UNDP TRAC 2 resources, will launch core activities. The **unfunded portion of USD 150,000** reflects strategic opportunities for scaling up impact and institutional sustainability through co-financing and donor contributions.

Output	Description (Funded)	Additional Activities (Unfunded)	Funded Budget (USD)	Unfunded Budget (USD)
Output 1: Pollution Hotspot Assessment and Waste Mapping	Technical assessments, research center support, site-level data validation.	Expand site visits to more hotspots, conduct sampling, and establish GIS system with training at Ministry of Environment.	$22,000	$36,000

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Output 2: Aquaculture and MPA Feasibility Studies	Site visits, aquaculture analysis, protected area scoping, and Update the data and analysis of the draft national Fisheries Policy Paper	Additional scoping missions, stakeholder consultations, and technical biodiversity studies.	$23,000	$25,000
Output 3: Stakeholder Consultations & Technical Roundtables	Technical workshops, inter-ministerial meetings, national committee support.	Technical training for Marine Research Centre and MoE on pollution; support to Ministry of Economy on sectoral planning and data.	$22,000	$22,000
Output 4: Community Engagement and Awareness Activities	Awareness sessions, communications materials, media engagement.	Expand sessions to all marine ports and municipalities; develop broader awareness materials.	$10,000	$15,000
Output 5: Local Blue Economy Grants Mechanism Established to Support Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Innovation	Stakeholder consultations, grant scheme design	Blue Economy idea challenge, pipeline mapping, and roadmap preparation, training and small grants to selected ideas.	$17,000	$40,000
Output 6: Final Cooperation Framework and Project Documentation	PRODOC and MoU development, translation, legal and editorial support.	Fully covered with existing funds.	$1,000	$0
Project Coordination, Admin, Reporting	Cross-cutting support, logistics, reporting, monitoring.	Enhanced logistical and coordination support.	$5,000	$4,000
UNDP GMS (7%)	Cost recovery on direct programme inputs.	Adjusted with increased contributions.	$7,000	$8,000

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VI. ANNUAL WORK PLANE

Expected Output *And baseline, indicators including annual targets*	Planned Activities *List activity results and associated actions*	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Budget Description	Planned Budget (USD)
Output 1: Pollution Hotspot Assessment **Indicator:** Number of coastal pollution hotspots identified and mapped. **Baseline:** The Albayroni Centre has conducted basic research on pollution hotspots as part of a regional initiative. However, information on marine pollution is scattered, and there is no accurate or comprehensive database on these hotspots. **Target:** Comprehensive identification and mapping of at least 10 pollution hotspots along the Libyan coast.	Compile and analyse pollution data from national research centres; categorize waste types and rank hotspots. Conduct field assessments in selected coastal cities and develop GIS-based maps for policy use.	Q2–Q3 2025	UNDP	National and International Consultants, Travel	22,000
Output 2: Aquaculture and MPA Feasibility **Indicator:** Number of feasibility studies conducted for aquaculture development and MPA establishment. **Baseline:** Limited feasibility assessments; previous studies have highlighted potential but lack comprehensive evaluations. **Target:** Completion of feasibility studies for aquaculture in three pilot sites and identification of at least two potential MPAs.	Assess aquaculture viability at Farwa, Ain Al-Zayan, and Timimi based on environmental, technical, and market criteria. Identify potential areas for Marine Protected Areas and Ramsar site rehabilitation through consultations and surveys. Update the data and analysis of the draft national Fisheries Policy Paper	Q2–Q3 2025	UNDP	National and International Consultants, Travel	23,000
Output 3: Stakeholder Consultations **Indicator:** Number of stakeholder consultation meetings held and action plans developed.	Hold two national workshops to coordinate Blue Economy strategy and marine pollution management.	Q2–Q3 2025	UNDP	National and International Consultants, Travel, Venue	22,000

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Baseline: Initial consultations conducted with main ministries and the National Committee on Blue Economy in March and April 2025. **Target:** At least five stakeholder consultation meetings leading to the development of a comprehensive action plan.	Establish a technical task force and strengthen inter-ministerial dialogue on investment and safeguards.				
Output 4: Community Awareness Activities **Indicator:** Number of community awareness campaigns conducted and participants reached. **Baseline:** Low public awareness; environmental issues are generally not a priority for Libyan society. **Target:** Implementation of awareness campaigns in at least three coastal communities, reaching a minimum of 500 participants.	Conduct awareness session in a coastal town to promote sustainable marine practices and pollution prevention. Develop and disseminate a marine waste infographic and social media brief in Arabic and English.	Q3 2025	UNDP	Communication Services, Travel	10,000
Output 5: Local Blue Economy Grants Mechanism Established to Support Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Innovation **Indicator:** Number of grants awarded to local Blue Economy initiatives. **Baseline:** No existing grants mechanism specifically targeting the Blue Economy. **Target:** Establishment of a grants mechanism and awarding of at least 10 grants to local entrepreneurs, with a focus on women and youth.	Engage stakeholders in 4–5 coastal municipalities to assess Blue Economy entrepreneurship needs and local priorities. Design the eligibility criteria, selection process, and operational framework for a national small grants scheme targeting women and youth.	Q3-Q4 2025	UNDP	National and International Consultants, Travel, Venue	17,000
Output 6: Final cooperation Framework and programme formulated **Indicator:** Completion and official endorsement of the MOU and Signature of the Programne document.	MoU with Marine Wealth Ministry; Finalize PRODOC	Q3 2025	UNDP	Signing Ceremony	1000

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Baseline: As of April 2025, a concept note for a comprehensive initiative is still in draft stage, PIP is in process, and MoU areas of cooperation has been discussed and agreed with the ministries of Environment, Marine wealth, and Economy. **Target:** By the end of the Initiation phase, develop, finalize, and secure official endorsement of the PRODOC and Relevant MoUs.					
Coordination and Admin Support	Logistics, reporting, admin, monitoring	Q2–Q4 2025	UNDP	Direct Project Cost	5,000
Total:					**100,000 USD**